

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

13 SEP 1991

Mr. William Gertz  
The Washington Times  
3600 New York Avenue, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Mr. Gertz:

I have received your letter and appreciate the concerns you have expressed regarding disclosure of information which would be harmful to national security.

The CIA, of course, has no intention of interfering with the First Amendment rights of The Washington Times, nor is it concerned with the position you take on various issues. We are concerned, however, when you discuss specific facts which reveal and may jeopardize Agency sources and methods and thus impair our ability to collect critically needed intelligence information.

We appreciate your advance calls to the CIA Public Affairs Office about your articles. However, if you reveal only the general nature of the articles, we often are unable to determine whether there is any damaging disclosure of sources and methods information. If you could give us advance notice with specific facts, we may be able to identify and warn you away from such damaging information in some cases. There will be other cases, as I am sure you understand, when the Agency must state that it has no comment.

Again, I appreciate your concern about protecting national security information. I regret that I cannot meet with you personally at this time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Richard J. Kerr".

Richard J. Kerr  
Acting Director of Central Intelligence